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1955/04/28

Form FS-612

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CLASSIFICATION : TOP SECRET

DATE : April 28, 1955 2200

No. : 4790

RECEIVED : April 29, 1955 1430

Typed : April 29, 1955 1515

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SENT PARIS 3849 RPTD INFO SAIGON 4790

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Re Deptel 3828 to Paris rptd Saigon 4756 and Deptel 3837 to Paris rptd Saigon 4766.

1. You should carry out paragraph 7 A repeat 7 A of Deptel 3828 to Paris rptd Saigon 4756. Secretary saw French Ambassador late today and talked to him along these lines:

Situation disturbing and disappointing in Vietnam. FTTYS (as received) people have concluded it confirms estimate it is hopeless to try to build anything there. Considerable concern felt in all quarters in Washington and we must re-examine our policies. Question of French support for Diem government important. Without criticizing French government in any way, it is fact French interests and opinion in Saigon in particular have never supported and often opposed Diem. Perhaps this could not be helped but French government had undertaken last year understanding with US on wholehearted support for Diem government in effort to rally all anti-Communist forces to it. If nevertheless present state of affairs is result, we must recognize there are very serious obstacles to such support that will prvent any government in Vietnam from succeeding. We feel it is essential that we have some frank statement from French that they can wholeheartedly support another government without leading to similar results, or if their support cannot more adequately assure better results then we had better know it because it is going to be most difficult for us to continue support particularly in view of evident Congressional opinion. French should realize it would probably be difficult get support from Congress for any change in Saigon in any case.

General Collins expressed his opinion that no government in Vietnam has any hope unless French government and its officials give unequivocal evidence of full support. Secretary pointed out incongruity of situation where chief of government is prevented from taking measures against rebels in control of police. Every time he has tried to act he is pushed back while the Binh Xuyen is not. Secretary [illegible] emphasized that

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unless Bao Dai takes adequate measures to remove the police control from the Binh Xuyen and ensures the integration of the sects, then every government in Vietnam will suffer same fate as Diem.

Secretary said Collins was returning Friday morning to Saigon and would be in touch with Ely immediately. Secretary also emphasized that Bao Dai should not repeat not crystallize any action until Ely and Collins have been able to review the situation together. Collins scheduled arrive Saigon Monday May second.

2. In elaborating on the above paragraph and reftel you may give the following points orally to French authorities but not repeat not in writing:

"The present crisis has forced the US to review its basic policy toward Viet-Nam:

"In our judgment, even with the full support of the US, no government in Viet-Nam will succeed unless it enjoys --

1. Nationalist Vietnamese support;
2. Unambiguous French support; and
3. Full support of Bao Dai.

For over six months the US has loyally ;and vigorously supported the present government under Diem. We are fully aware of his administrative and personal weaknesses which have contributed to the present crisis. We firmly believe, however, that no government could have avoided the present crisis with only the partial support of the French government and Bao Dai.

"We have no intention of trying to head off the proposed action by Bao Dai or otherwise intervene in the present situation, but we want the French and Bao Dai to have no doubt as to our attitude.

"The US is not interested in continuing to seek to give support to Viet-Nam under the present ambiguous conditions. We will not continue to engage our prestige and furnish our resources for a project which is certain to fail.

"To obtain US support, therefore, any future government in Viet-Nam, whether or not it includes Diem, ;must be clearly assured of the following:

1. The full and unqualified support of France, thereby dispelling any ambiguity with respect to north Viet-Nam.

2. Bao Dai must ensure that the legal government has full authority, including control of the police and the military forces of Viet-Nam.

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Bao Dai and the French must wholeheartedly assist by every means available to them in integrating the sects into the normal life of Viet-Nam, in relieving them of their feudal powers, and territorial control, and integrating their private armies into the national army."

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